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*courage is contagious*

## Viewing cable 06LIMA158, LIMA MAYOR LUIS CASTANEDA ON OLLANTA HUMALA

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### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06LIMA158**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">06LIMA158</a>	<a href="#">2006-01-13 14:19</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Lima</a>

Appears in these articles:

<http://elcomercio.pe/>

VZCZCXYZ0002  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHPE #0158/01 0131419  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 131419Z JAN 06  
FM AMEMBASSY LIMA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8087  
INFO RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 2842  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 8909  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ JAN QUITO 9916  
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 0070  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 6437  
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 000158

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/11/2016  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PE](#)  
SUBJECT: LIMA MAYOR LUIS CASTANEDA ON OLLANTA HUMALA

Classified By: Political Counselor Alexander Margulies. Reason: 1.4(b/

d).

...  
id: 49732  
date: 1/13/2006 14:19  
refid: 06LIMA158  
origin: Embassy Lima  
classification: CONFIDENTIAL  
destination:  
header:  
VZCZCXYZ0002  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHPE #0158/01 0131419  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 131419Z JAN 06  
FM AMEMBASSY LIMA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8087  
INFO RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 2842  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 8909  
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RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 0070  
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11. (C) SUMMARY: Lima Mayor Luis Castaneda, in a 1/10 meeting with the Ambassador and Polcouns, characterized Ollanta Humala's appeal to Peru's marginalized voters as one of "sentiment," not reasoning. He cautioned that frontal attacks on Humala will backfire and mused that the best way to undercut the latter would be by shining a light on him, his positions, and his congressional candidates. Castaneda, who is Peru's most popular politician, said that he would personally get involved in the campaign "at an opportune moment," which would probably come sometime between the first and second rounds of presidential balloting. His National Solidarity party is a member of Lourdes Flores' Unidad Nacional alliance, and will be running a slate of congressional candidates under its banner, most of whom have worked with Castaneda before. He predicted that the presidential race will come down to Flores and Humala, with Flores coming out on top. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) Castaneda assessed Ollanta Humala's appeal as follows:

-- The Peruvian electorate can be divided into two sectors: the conventional sector, which will vote for traditional politicians such as Lourdes Flores, Valentin Paniagua and Alan Garcia, and the non-conventional sector, which will vote for anti-system candidates such as Alberto Fujimori or Humala.

-- The non-conventional sector has been growing because the traditional politicians and the three branches of government are increasingly discredited. The people are fed up with the old figures, they see no light at the end of the tunnel, and the polls show that most would leave the country if they could.

-- The non-conventional sector's vote is one of rejection, it is not a positive action. Support for Ollanta Humala is based on this "sentiment" of rejection, not on any of

Humala's particular qualities. The non-conventional candidate could be Humala, or it could be any John Doe, just so long as his campaign is aimed at obtaining vengeance on the corrupt elite.

-- The less Humala says the more he will benefit from this sentiment: "If I was his advisor I'd tell him to keep his mouth shut."

-- The population also senses a lack of leadership, and Humala appeals to the desire for a strong figure in charge.

13. (C) The traditional politicians, Castaneda acknowledged, are largely to blame for this situation, as they have battled over the spoils of power rather than dedicate themselves to improving the lot of Peru's poorest. He contrasted this to his own actions as Mayor, in which he has sought to employ the Lima Municipality's meager resources in the most efficient manner possible to bring about positive tangible improvements in people's lives, pointing in particular to his program of building over 1000 staircases in the shantytowns clinging to the hillsides surrounding the capital (Note: Castaneda's approval rating currently is about 80%. End Note). Castaneda also faulted the media for helping to destroy people's faith in the country and demoralizing society as a whole, noting that it refuses to provide adequate coverage to positive developments while accentuating the negatives. He dismissed most media organs and journalists as little more than blackmail artists, dredging up scandals in order to extort money from those involved, rather than to promote needed reforms.

14. (C) The best way to counter Humala, Castaneda opined, would be by forcing him and his followers into the light of publicity. The more people become aware of who Humala, his vice presidential and his congressional running mates really are, the Lima Mayor explained, the more it will weaken the power of the "sentiment" that has brought him up in the polls and, "the more the people will realize that he is not the dream they thought he was." Another useful tactic, Castaneda suggested, would be to create confusion regarding the four Humalas currently involved in politics: Ollanta, his brother Ulises (running as a rival presidential hopeful on the Avanza Pais ticket), his imprisoned brother Antauro (charged with responsibility for the death of five people in the January

2005 Andahuaylas uprising) and his father Isaac (most recently talking favorably about the possibility of war with Chile).

15. (C) The worst way to counter Humala, Castaneda continued, would be to attack him frontally. If the traditional politicians try this, he declared, it would just play into Humala's hands as his potential electorate is naturally inclined to believe the opposite of what the traditional pols say. The media is equally discredited, and has far less influence than it is thought to have. Castaneda pointed out that he was elected Mayor despite having the media against his candidacy. "The way to communicate with the people," he emphasized, "is not through words," but through personal contact and deeds.

16. (C) When asked by the Ambassador for his predictions on the outcome of the election, Castaneda replied that he thought it would come down to a run-off between Lourdes Flores (to whose Unidad Nacional alliance he belongs) and Humala, with Flores emerging victorious. He dismissed the possibility that APRA's Alan Garcia would win through to the second round, calling him a "snake oil salesman with a tired message whose day has passed." Castaneda cautioned, however, that he suspected that his opinion may have been influenced more by his heart than his head.

17. (C) With respect to his own involvement in the electoral process, Castaneda said that he would intervene, "at the opportune moment." He was not sure precisely when this moment would come, but stated that it would probably be

sometime between the first and second round of presidential balloting. A politician has to safeguard his influence and credibility, the Mayor explained, and he would be very careful in deciding when to play his political chits.

18. (C) Castaneda added that his National Solidarity party has largely finalized its congressional candidates that will run under the Unidad Nacional alliance. Most have worked with the Mayor before, either for the municipality or for the Social Security Administration, which Castaneda previously headed. Almost all of these candidates have never served in Congress before, he noted, the exceptions being holdovers in Lambayeque and Piura (a reference to current Unidad Nacional legislators Rafael Aita and Fabiola Morales).

19. (C) COMMENT: Castaneda is by far and away Peru's most popular politician, an honor he has earned through hard work, apparently honest government, and an ability to communicate with the poorest classes, understanding their needs and responding effectively to them. As he himself noted, "I am much more popular in the E sector (Peru's least well off) than Ollanta." His National Solidarity party has built up a strong party organization in the shanty towns around Lima, which enables him to keep his finger on the socio-political pulse. His views on the basis for Humala's popularity, and on the ways to undermine it, are worth paying attention to.  
END COMMENT.  
STRUBLE

=====CABLE ENDS=====